

REMARKS

Claims 1-18 are pending. An Office Action mailed November 3, 2005 rejected Claims 1-18. By way of this Amendment, Applicant hereby amends Claims 11 and 14-18, and adds new Claims 19-23. The Office Action cited five references in the Information Disclosure Statement per 37 CFR 1.98(a)(2), Applicant has included another copy of each of these five references. The Office Action denied the request to correct inventorship because the request lacked the required fee; Applicant has resubmitted the request with the required fee. Pursuant to 37 CFR 1.111, Applicant hereby respectfully requests reconsideration of the application.

SECTION 102 REJECTIONS

Claims 6-9 and 18 were rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Anderson. The Office Action states, "Anderson shows a surface drying system comprising: a vacuum mat 11 having a surface with at least one vacuum port (at 12) and a plurality of channels 10; and a vacuum source 33 connected with the port, wherein the vacuum source creates an enclosure of negative pressure within the perimeter of the mat and urges water to flow through the channels towards the vacuum source to effect moisture removal." Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Applicant respectfully submits that Anderson teaches a vacuum mat having a plurality of tubes, *a support platform having a plurality of channels* and a vacuum port, and a vacuum source connected with the port: "Openings in the support platform lead to a series of *channels* 10 formed *within the support platform*." (col. 7, lns. 49-51; Fig. 1C). In other words, the channels in Anderson's device are within the support platform, not within or as part of the mat itself. In contrast, Applicant's system does not require a support platform, and, accordingly, Applicant's


25315

CUSTOMER NUMBER

- 8 -

INJS-1-1003ROA to client

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Claim 6 claims a *vacuum mat with a plurality of channels* and a vacuum port, and a vacuum source connected with the port. Additionally, Anderson states, “A preferred component of the cleaning system is a structural platform placed below the vacuum mat. The vacuum mat can be used alone, if a means for removing dirt and debris from tubular components within the mat is realized. However, removal by using a support platform is much more practical” (col.4, Ins. 7-12). This passage makes clear that Anderson teaches a mat with tubes and a support platform with channels, and aspires to a mat with tubes and channels, but does not enable such a structure. For these reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that Anderson does not anticipate the system of Claims 6-9 and 18.

Claims 6-9, 11-15, and 18 were rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Wenander. The Office Action states, “Wenander shows a surface drying system comprising: a vacuum mat 2, 5-7 having a surface with at least one vacuum port 11 and a plurality of channels (between 9); and a vacuum source (col. 2, lines 35-36) connected with the port, wherein the vacuum source creates an enclosure of negative pressure within the perimeter of the mat and urges water to flow through the channels towards the vacuum source to effect moisture removal.” Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Applicant respectfully submits that Wenander teaches a flexible upper cover 2, a distance net 5, a lower cloth or sheet 6 with a plurality of small holes 7, and a vacuum source. Alternately, Wenander teaches a flexible upper cover 2, an embossed cloth 8 with elevations 9 and a plurality of small holes 7 (replacing the distance net 5 and lower cloth 6), and a vacuum source. Applicant’s claimed system comprises only a vacuum mat and a vacuum source, and does not require these extra elements. Thus, Applicant respectfully submits that Wenander does not teach or suggest the systems of Claims 6-9 and amended Claim 18.

The Office Action states, “Wenander also shows a method for removing moisture, the method comprising: placing at least one water impermeable vacuum mat 2,5-6 having a manifold 3 over a surface 1, the mat configured to have a lattice formation (see Fig. 1), the lattice

formation providing spaces; connecting the manifold 3 with a vacuum source (col. 2, lines 35-36); and apply a vacuum, wherein negative pressure causes water to flow through the spaces within the lattice formation to the vacuum source to effect moisture removal underneath and from the surface.”

Applicant respectfully submits that Wenander teaches a flexible upper cover 2, a distance net 5, and a lower cloth or sheet 6. Applicant’s claimed system does not require these extra elements. Additionally, amended Claim 11 includes the limitation, “at least one integrally formed manifold.” As Wenander teaches a suction box removable from the flexible upper cover, Wenander does not teach or suggest an integrally formed manifold. Thus, Applicant submits that Wenander does not teach the claimed system of amended Claim 11.

The Office Action states, “Wenander also shows a system for removing moisture, the system comprising: a means (inherent by hand or other device) for placing at least one water impermeable vacuum mat 2,5-6 having a manifold 3 over a surface 1, the mat configured to have a lattice formation, the lattice formation providing spaces; a means (not shown, inherent) for connecting the manifold with a vacuum source; and a means (col.2, lines 35-36) for applying a vacuum, wherein negative pressure causes water to flow through the spaces within the lattice formation to the vacuum source to effect moisture removal underneath and from the surface.”

Applicant respectfully submits that Wenander does not include (from amended Claim 18) “a means for applying a vacuum over a surface, the means for applying comprising a manifold and configured to have a lattice formation, the lattice formation providing spaces.” For this reason, Wenander does not anticipate amended Claim 18.

SECTION 103 REJECTIONS

Claim 16 was rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wenander. The Office Action states, “The moisture removing method of Wenander as above includes all that is recited in claim 16 except for a second vacuum mat placed on a second plane. It would have


25315

CUSTOMER NUMBER

- 10 -

INJS-1-1003ROA to client

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been an obvious matter of design choice to place any number of vacuum mat on any desired plane in order to obtain the optimum result..." Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

For the same reasons stated above for Claims 6-9, 11-15, and 18, Applicant respectfully submits that the present device is patentable over Wenander. Additionally, Wenander does not teach the feature of Claim 15, from which Claim 16 depends, that "the second vacuum mat receives vacuum from the first vacuum mat, the first vacuum mat connected to the vacuum source."

Claims 1-5, 10, and 17 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Anderson or Wenander. The Office Action states, "The moisture removing apparatus of Anderson or Wenander as above includes all that is recited in claims 1-5, 10, and 17 except for using a vacuum chamber for removing water from a surface." Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

For the same reasons as stated above, Anderson or Wenander does not anticipate Applicant's device. Thus, Applicant respectfully submits that the present device is patentable over Anderson or Wenander.

CONCLUSION

With the amendments set for above, all of the remaining Claims stand in condition for allowance, should the Examiner have any questions, the Applicant requests that the Examiner contact the Applicant's attorney at the address and telephone numbers set forth above.

Respectfully submitted,

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MAIL CERTIFICATE

I hereby certify that this communication is being deposited with the United States Postal Service via first class mail under 37 C.F.R. § 1.08 on the date indicated below addressed to: MAIL STOP AMENDMENT, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.

April 3 2006
Date of Deposit

Susan L. Rodriguez
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25315

CUSTOMER NUMBER

- 12 -

INJS-1-1003ROA to client

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PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICEATTY. DOCKET NO.
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10/785,383INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT
(Use several sheets if necessary)APPLICANTS
STORRER, Ernest J.FILING DATE
February 24, 2004

GROUP ART UNIT

U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS

*EXAMINER INITIAL		DOCUMENT NUMBER	DATE	NAME	CLASS	SUBCLASS	FILING DATE IF APPROPRIATE
TL	U1	1,661,553	03/06/28	Louis Barr			03/19/27
TL	U2	1,703,551	02/26/29	W.M. Singer			05/09/28
TL	U3	2,623,364	12/30/52	C.G. Munters			07/17/47
TL	U4	2,758,390	08/14/56	C.G. Munters			05/01/51
TL	U5	3,115,567	12/24/63	Henry E. Meltzer			10/13/60
TL	U6	3,805,405	04/23/74	Ambos			06/07/72
TL	U7	4,391,619	07/05/83	Shono et al.			09/23/82
TL	U8	4,571,849	02/25/86	Gardner et al.			10/15/84
TL	U9	5,408,759	04/25/95	Bass			12/02/93
TL	U10	5,555,643	09/17/96	Guasch			05/26/95
TL	U11	5,893,216	04/13/99	Smith et al.			07/09/97

FOREIGN PATENT DOCUMENTS

		DOCUMENT NUMBER	DATE	COUNTRY	CLASS	SUBCLASS	TRANSLATION	
							YES	NO
	P1	195,402	02/14/08	Germany				X
	P2	564,420	12/29/23	French				X
	P3	643,073	09/10/28	French				X
	P4	546,486	03/14/32	German				X
	P5							

OTHER PRIOR ART (Including Author, Title, Date, Pertinent Pages, Etc.)

	O1	Willy Vermeulen, Drying of Floor Plaster Insulation, 8/20/86, Pg. 29 of unknown reference
TL	O2	Injectidry Marketing Brochure, October 2003
	O3	

EXAMINER

DATE CONSIDERED

* EXAMINER:

Initial if reference considered, whether or not criteria is in conformance with MPEP 609. Draw line through citation if not in conformance and not considered. Include copy of this form with next communication to applicant(s).